

Florence Nightingale: The Pioneer Leader of Nursing Profession

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Abstract

Florence Nightingale was born on 12th May, 1820 and left the mortal world on 13th August, 1910. She was an English reformer, statistician and founder of modern nursing. She is known as “The Lady with the Lamp.” On 12th May, International Nurses Day is celebrated. It is the birth day of Florence Nightingale. Good leaders are not born but anyone have desire and will power, can become an effective leader. A person influences the other persons, it is done to fulfil an objective of the organization, called the leadership. The Leaders concentrate on what they are (be), what they know and what they do. People wants to be guided by those they respect, have a clear vision, must be ethical. Nursing is a profession. It includes in the health care sector. It is activity of care of individuals, families and communities. It for attain, maintain, or recover optimal health as well as quality of life. Nursing contributes care autonomously and collaboratively. It cares for individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities. It cares of sick or well in all settings. The promotion of health, prevention of health, care of ill, disabled and dying people is goals of Nursing. Key roles of nursing are advocacy, research, promotion of safe environment, education etc. The main function of the nurse is to assist the individual (sick or well) in those activities which are helpful to health, its recovery or to a peaceful death. These activities would complete without aid, if he had needed strength or knowledge. Most of the countries, entrance and practice of nursing is governed by law. It is regulated state or national level. Florence Nightingale is known as pioneer of nursing profession but she contributed in statistics, sanitation, literature and the women’s movement and theology.

Keywords: Florence Nightingale, the lady with the lamp, the pioneer of nursing profession, Crimean war, leadership in nursing

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Florence Nightingale was born on 12th May, 1820 and left the mortal world on 13th August, 1910. She was an English reformer, statistician and founder of modern nursing. Florence Nightingale became famous while serving as a trainer and manager of nursing. She worked in war of Crimea, where she

cared for injured soldiers. She did this all at Constantinople [1]. She presented nursing a reputed profession and identified as “The lady with the lamp” while taking rounds of wounded soldiers at night.[2]

Leadership

“Leadership is influence- nothing more, nothing less.” Warren Bennis “It is the capacity to translate vision into reality. - John Maxwell [3]

‘Leadership is the quality of behaviour of the individuals whereby they guide people or their activities in organised efforts’. - C.I. Bernard [4]

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‘Leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically towards achieving objectives. - *Bernard Keys and Thomas* [4]

“Leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically towards their objectives. Leadership must extract cooperation and willingness of the individuals and groups to attain the organisational objectives.”- *Keith Davis* [4]

“Leadership is a relationship in which one person influences others to work together willingly on related tasks to attain what the leader desires.”- *George R. Terry* [4]

“Leadership is the process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of group goals.”- *Koontz and O’Donnell* [4]

Leadership is a continuous process that influences the behaviour. There are co-relations between a leader and followers. The leader influences the behaviour of individuals or group around him to achieve desired goals. Leadership is a dynamic and a relational process. It is a relational and dynamic process.

It involves interactions among leaders, members and sometimes outsiders. The quality leaders are not born. They can become quality leader by education, training and experience.

There are certain things, a team leader must be, know and do to inspire his/her workers. These certain things acquired through continual work and study.

The Leaders concentrate on what they are (be), what they know and what they do.

Table 1, 2 & 3 are explaining the be, know and do concept of leadership.

Table 1. BE Concept of Leadership.

Directional Statement	How to be
Be a professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be loyal to the organization • Perform selfless service • Take personal responsibility
Be a professional who possess good character traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty • Competence • Candour • Commitment • Integrity • Courage • Straightforwardness • Imagination

Table 2. Know Concept of Leadership.

Statement	Knowing Part
Know the four elements of leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follower • Leader • Communication • Situation
Know yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths and weakness of your character • Knowledge and skills
Know human nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human needs • Emotions • How people respond to stress
Know your job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be proficient and be able to train others in their tasks
Know your organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where to go for help its climate and culture • Who the unofficial leaders are?

Table 3. Do Concept of Leadership.

Statement	Doing Part
Do provide direction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting • Problem solving • Decision making • Planning
Do implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating, • Coordinating • Supervising • Evaluating
Do motivate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop moral and spirit in the organization • Train • Coach • Counsel

Nursing Profession

Nursing is a profession. It includes in the health care sector. It is activity of care of individuals, families and communities. Nursing profession comes under health care sector. It is centralized on care of individuals. It covers families and communities also. By this act they get optimum health. They may get it continue.[5]

Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well, and in all settings. Nursing includes the promotion of health, prevention of illness, and the care of ill, disabled and dying people. Advocacy, promotion of a safe environment, research, participation in shaping health policy and in patient and health systems management, and education are also key nursing roles.— *International Council of Nurses* [6]

The unique function of the nurse is to assist the individual, sick or well, in the performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery (or to peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the necessary strength, will or knowledge.— *Virginia Avenel Henderson* [7]

The authority of nursing practice is permitted as per social contract and draft of professional rights and responsibility. It is also mechanisms for public accountability. Most of the countries, entrance and practice of nursing is governed by law. It is regulated state or national level.

Florence Nightingale and his Work for Nursing Profession

Statistics

She learnt the mathematics and statistics from her father. Later, she became a pioneer of visual presentations. She also got fame in statistical graphs [8]. She presented these reports to the members of parliament and civil servants.

Sanitation

She gave her attention on the health of the British army which was living in India. She reported on bad condition of drainage, water, overcrowding, poor ventilation. These conditions were the causes of high rates of deaths.[9]

Following the report, The Royal Commission on India (1858–1863). Nightingale summarized that the health of the army and the Indians was at risk. So, she recommends to improve the sanitary conditions of the whole country. Nightingale performed a statistical study of sanitation in Indian rural life. She advocated to establish a Royal Commission for India. In 1873, after 10 years of sanitary reform, Nightingale reported on the mortality of the soldiers in India [10]. The drainage and development contributed a significant role in national life expectancy. During this time, medical science did not make any significant impact on most fatal epidemic diseases.[11]

Literature and the Women's Movement

In Victorian England, Nightingale took the impressive achievements by doing the struggle against the background of social restraints on women. Her father's name was William Edward Nightingale. He was a highly wealthy landowner. His father's family shifted in the highest circle of English society. In Nightingale's time, women neither took formal education in universities nor they joined professional careers. They used to marry and bear children. But Nightingale was not in those women, who only live to marry and bear children. She was a fortunate enough. Her father believes education for both sexes. She learnt Italian, Greek, Philosophy, History and Mathematics from her father [12]. Her contribution in field of nursing and mathematics are well-known. Throughout her life, she wrote some 200 books, pamphlets.[13]

Theology

During her life, she followed Christian religion of English. Nightingale felt that genuine religion should show the active care and love for others. She wrote a lot of in theology. She argued about God, hell and heaven. Her philosophy was that religions are to help the human being. She also had a good thought about non-secular hospitals. In practice, many religiously motivated health workers were eager for own salvation. The salvation of self is an inferior motivation. It is not helpful to deliver best possible care.[14]

When we see above description and explanations, we find that Florence Nightingale was a founder of nursing profession. She contributed in various areas of societal life. She struggled with many factors of truth in her life. She had almost leadership qualities. She maintains appropriate professional and personal relations with higher authorities, religious persons, co-workers, subordinates and common people. She was a true pioneer leader of nursing profession.

CONCLUSION

Florence Nightingale (12 May, 1820-13 August, 1910), was an English reformer, statistician and the founder of modern nursing. She was an English reformer, statistician and founder of modern nursing. She is known as "The Lady with the Lamp." On 12th May, International Nurses Day is celebrated. It is the birth day of Florence Nightingale. Leadership is a dynamic and a relational process. It involves interactions among leaders, members and sometimes outsiders. Self-study, education, training, and experiences are the essential requirement to be an effective leader. Leaders apply their characteristics in this process e.g. beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills. The Leaders concentrate on what they are (be), what they know and what they do. People wants to be guided by those they respect, have a clear vision, must be ethical.

Nursing is a profession. It includes in the health care sector. It is centralized on care of individuals. It covers families and communities also. It for attain, maintain, or recover optimal health as well as quality of life. Nursing contributes care autonomously and collaboratively. Nursing personnel cares of indivial. It also takes care of families and communities. It cares of sick or well in all settings. Key roles of nursing are advocacy, research, promotion of safe environment, education etc. The main function of the nurse is to assist the individual (sick or well) in those activities which are helpful to health, its recovery or to a peaceful death. Most of the countries, entrance and practice of nursing is governed by law. It is regulated state or national level. Florence Nightingale not only worked for nursing profession but she contributed in statistics, sanitation, literature and the women's movement and theology.

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